# THE POLITICAL RHETORIC OF KING CHARLES III: STYLISTIC AND FUNCTIONAL ANALYSIS

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*The aim of this article is to identify, classify, and interpret the stylistic devices and tropes used in the political speeches of King Charles III (delivered in the period of 2022-2025), and to analyze their functions in the context of contemporary monarchical discourse. Five main types of stylistic devices have been identified: syntactic-structural (e.g., anaphora, inversion), emotional-expressive (e.g., rhetorical questions, allusions), ritualistic (e.g.,archaisms, ceremonial formulas), humanistic (e.g., inclusivity, moral appeals), and performative (e.g., intonation, pausing). It has been proven that stylistic techniques, acquiring a representative function, manifest the monarch's views and ideas, and they become a means of forming political culture, mobilizing social values, and adapting the monarchy to the new conditions of the global world. The study reveals that Charles III's speeches represent a model of strategically structured, stylistically refined, and functionally multifaceted discourse. The monarch's language blends verbal tradition, institutional legitimacy, and contemporary communicative sensitivity. The study results show that Charles III's speeches are the element of the British monarchy's "soft power".*

***Keywords:*** *political rhetoric, stylistic devices, tropes, political discourse, discourse analysis, public speaking, British monarchy*

***Єсипенко Н.Г., Ванчуляк Я. О. Політична реторика короля Чарльза ІІІ: стилістичний та функціональний аналіз.*** *Метою цієї статті є ідентифікація, класифікація та інтерпретація стилістичних засобів і тропів, використаних у політичних промовах короля Карла ІІІ (виголошених у період 2022-2025 рр.), а також аналіз їх функцій у контексті сучасного монархічного дискурсу. Визначено*

*п'ять основних типів стилістичних засобів: синтаксично-структурні (наприклад, анафора, інверсія), емоційно-експресивні (наприклад, риторичні питання, алюзії), ритуальні (наприклад, архаїзми, церемоніальні формули), гуманістичні(наприклад, інклюзивність, моральні заклики) та перформативні (наприклад, інтонація, паузи). Доведено, що стилістичні прийоми, набуваючи репрезентативної функції, виявляють погляди та ідеї монарха і стають засобом формування політичної культури, мобілізації соціальних цінностей та адаптації монархії до нових умов глобалізованого світу. Дослідження показує, що промови Карла III є зразком стратегічно структурованого, стилістично вишуканого та функціонально багатогранного дискурсу. Мова монарха поєднує вербальну традицію, інституційну легітимність та сучасну комунікативну чутливість. Результати дослідження показують, що промови Карла III є елементом «м'якої сили» британської монархії.*

***Ключові слова:*** *політична риторика, стилістичні прийоми, тропи, політичний дискурс, аналіз дискурсу, публічні виступи, британська монархія.*

**Introduction.**

The language of a political leader is not only an instrument of communication but also a means of shaping the ideological aspeccts, the national narrative, and the social emotional atmosphere. It gains particular significance during periods of social change, crisis of confidence in institutions, or transformation of the state system. In this context, the political speeches of the Monarch of Great Britain, as a symbolic figure of national unity, acquire a special importance. Following the death of Queen Elizabeth II, who personified the stability of the British Monarchy for over seventy years, the figure of Charles III and his first public speeches placed themselves at the center of widespread public attention.

The relevance of the study is determined by the need to understand the role of the 21st-century European monarchy in the public discourse through the examination of a political style and linguistic imagery in monarchs' speeches. The originality of this research lies in defining the specificity of King Charles III's individual speech, on the one hand, as an heir to the monarchical rhetorical tradition, and on the other, as a public intellectual with many years of experience in environmental, intercultural, and moral communication.

The aim of the study is to identify, classify, and analyze the main stylistic devices and tropes employed by King Charles III in his political speeches, as well as to reveal their functional role in creating a political influence, shaping a public image of the monarch, and reproducing national values.

**Theoretical Background.**

The study of stylistic devices and tropes in the political discourse of British monarchs, particularly Charles III, is currently only emerging as a separate field of

academic interest. Despite a significant amount of works devoted to political rhetoric in general (Beard, 2000; Charteris-Black, 2005; Fairclough, 1995), the rhetoric of modern British monarchs has been studied fragmentarily. It is primarily considered as a part of a broader cultural or institutional context – the representation of the monarchy, national symbolism, or the legitimation of power (Strong, 2005; Cannadine, 2018).

In contemporary studies of the incumbent monarch's speech (Craig, 2023; Winston, 2022), attention is primarily drawn to the emotional nature of Charles's first public addresses as the new king, but the mechanism of rhetorical influence, associated with tropology, stylistic structure, and discursive strategy, remains insufficiently explored. There is a lack of systematization in the scholarly literature regarding which specific stylistic tropes and figures of speech dominate his political speeches and what function they perform within the monarch's political discourse. The question of whether the new monarch preserves the traditional stylistic means of the British monarchy or forms a new type of political style, adapted to the conditions of the global society, also remains debatable.

The theoretical basis for the study of monarchical speeches is comprised of scientific principles presented in the works of such Ukrainian scholars as F. Batsevych, Y. Bondarenko, T. Hovoryn, T. Dovzhykova, and others. Communicative models of interaction between politics and society, and the influence of the latter on socio-political processes, are examined based on the research of J. Baudrillard, J. Habermas, H. Lasswell, M. McLuhan, A. Toffler.

F. Batsevych expresses the opinion that a political discourse represents "a type of discourse directed at a future context. It models the interests of society; in other words, it is formed by authors and 'consumers,' as their aspirations and expectations are 'embedded' within it. Often, the discursive skills of politicians weigh more than their personal traits" (Batsevych, 2004, p. 158). T. Vashchuk holds the view that political discourse is "speech formations (written or oral) that relate to the sphere of politics, are realized verbally and extra-verbally, are actualized in a certain situational context, and are aimed at implementing specific pragmatic semantics" (Vashchuk, 2007, p. 183).

H. Vusyk and O. Antoniuk emphasize that a political discourse is a multi-layered phenomenon, the main components of which are: the text (in written or oral form), the extralinguistic context (purpose, circumstances, situation, method, and time of realization), and the presence of an addresser and addressee who interact. The principal feature of political discourse is its institutionality, and a

significant characteristic is its mediation by mass media and means of mass communication (Vusyk & Antoniuk, 2020, p. 217). We agree with N. Dvornik that "a political discourse is a verbal communication in which the sender and the recipient acquire social roles according to their participation in the political life of the country, and the subject of communication is the political life of society" (Dvornik, 2013, p. 28).

The use of stylistic devices is characteristic of political discourse. O. M. Byndas attributes the following ones to syntactic-stylistic devices:

1) stylistic tropes (or figures of speech) are words and phrases used in a figurative sense to create an image (metonymy, metaphor, comparison, hyperbole, irony, periphrasis). Such stylistic devices are necessary to emphasize the emotionality and expressiveness of the speech;

2) stylistic figures are phenomena of stylistic syntax in which syntactic constructions, expressive lexical content, and intonation techniques are combined. Syntactic figures of speech are focused on the indistinctness of word usage, and the intensification of emotionality and imagery of the expression (rhetorical questions, inversion, parallel constructions);

3) stylistic techniques are various ways of combining linguistic units of one level within units of a higher level, which are based on syntagmatic relations between stylistically marked and stylistically unmarked units in the text. Stylistic techniques used in delivering a political speech include aggressiveness, theatricality, ideological nature, and quoting. These expressive and pictorial means are aimed at enhancing the pragmatic effect, as well as the expressiveness of the politician's speech (Byndas, 2018, p. 4-5).

The following stylistic resources are classified as tropes: allegory, antiphrasis, antonomasia, asteism, hyperbole, wordplay, dysphemism, euphemism, epithet, irony, catachresis, litotes, meiosis, metaphor, metonymy, periphrasis, comparison, synecdoche, and personification (Rusanivskiy, 2004, p. 692-693). O. Selivanova defines a trope as a "linguistic-stylistic figure that possesses imagery and expressiveness, and is founded on the synthesis of traditional notions and situational representations, allowing the speaker to denote some objects, features, or phenomena through the nominative field of others" (Selivanova, 2016, p. 627).

Preliminary observations of the imagery in King Charles III's political speeches suggest that, compared to Elizabeth II, the King employs a significantly more expressive and conceptually rich style, which is linked to his long history of public and educational activity prior to ascending the throne. Thus, the proposed

research aims to fill the scholarly gap associated with the lack of a structured analysis of linguistic imagery in the monarch's political speeches.

**Methodological notes.**

The academic grounds upon which our work is based are determined by several key conceptual approaches. Cognitive-Discursive Linguistics (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980; Chilton, 2004), according to which metaphors and tropes serve not only a descriptive but also a conceptual function, enables a structured understanding of political reality. Critical Discourse Analysis (Fairclough, 1995; van Dijk, 1998) allows us to explore how power, legitimacy, and symbolic dominance are constructed through the use of stylistic devices. The Rhetoric of Narrative and Identity (Smith, 2010; Halliday, 2014) contributes to interpreting the role of rhetorical figures as a tool for forming collective identity and political subjectivity.

Since British monarchical rhetoric is particularly resistant to change and based on canons of the established tradition, the new manifestations of stylistic flexibility in Charles III's speeches are of great interest.

To achieve the aim, a qualitative linguistic analysis with elements of discourse analysis was employed. The research material consisted of official speeches by King Charles III delivered between 2022 and 2025. The sample material was formed based on open sources: the official website of the Royal Family (https://www.royal.uk), the BBC Archives, and The Guardian Speech Repository. The following aspect served as the criteria for material selection: exposure to the public, socio-political significance, official status, and the authenticity of the texts.

**Results and Discussion.**

Although the Monarch of Great Britain has not the executive power, he plays an important role as a moral authority, a symbol of statehood, and the succession of traditions. His speeches are not merely declarative addresses but a distinctive verbal form of a state ritual. King Charles III's rhetoric is characterized by balance, empathy, and deep cultural subtext. His style was shaped over many years while he carried out his duties as the Prince of Wales, particularly in the context of environmental diplomacy, cross-religion dialogue, and social cohesion. His language is designed to strengthen the ideals of unity, continuity, humanism, and national consciousness – values that are relevant amid contemporary political

challenges: Brexit, the war in Ukraine, the energy crisis, and the climate change. As a result of the qualitative analysis of Charles III's public speeches, a number of typical stylistic devices and tropes were identified as the ones bearing a rhetorical, ideological, and emotional load.

Linguistic analysis of Charles III's speeches showed that syntactic-structural devices, which are related to the organization of sentences and paragraphs in speeches, mostly shape the rhythm of the speech and emphasize key meanings. Anaphora – the repetition of initial words in successive sentences or parts of the text – is a characteristic feature of Charles III's speeches, serving the function of rhythmization, emotional amplification, and thematic unity: *"I shall strive to follow the inspiring example I have been set in upholding constitutional government, and to seek the peace, harmony and prosperity of the peoples of these Islands and of the Commonwealth realms and territories throughout the world. In this purpose, I am sustained by the affection and loyalty of the peoples whose sovereign I have been called to be."* (First Address to the Nation, 9 September 2022).

Parallelism – the clear symmetrical structuring of sentences – creates a sense of balance and harmony in the address: *"To carry out the heavy task that has been laid upon me, and to dedicate what remains to me of my life, I pray for the guidance and help of Almighty God."* (First Address to the Nation, 9 September 2022).

Inversion is often used by Charles III in speeches to achieve a solemn or emphatically traditional effect: *"Never shall we forget the burden she bore."* (First Address to the Nation, 9 September 2022).

Emotional-expressive devices are aimed at arousing an emotional reaction from the audience and strengthening the personal connection between the speaker and the listener. Rhetorical questions are used not to elicit an answer, but to engage attention and emphasize a problem: *"What is the value of our traditions if we do not adapt them to the world we live in?"* (Speech at the COP26 World Leaders Summit, 1 November 2021).

The King actively addresses themes of memory, loss, and hope with emotionally charged formulas, meaning he uses appeals to emotion: *"To my darling Mama, as you begin your last great journey to join my dear late Papa, I want simply to say this: thank you."* (First Address to the Nation, 9 September 2022).

Intertextuality is widely used, especially references to Shakespeare, the Bible, and classical English poetry: *"May 'flights of angels sing thee to thy rest'."* (First Address to the Nation, 9 September 2022). This phrase is a direct quote from Hamlet, which Charles III used to bid farewell to Queen Elizabeth II. It creates an elevated, poetic atmosphere and appeals to the cultural memory of Britons.

*"And wherever you may live in the United Kingdom or in the realms and territories across the world, and whatever may be your background or beliefs, I shall endeavour to serve you with loyalty, respect and love."* (First Address to the Nation – 9 September 2022). The example shows not a direct quote, but the sentence structure follows the Christian model of commandments for serving one's neighbor and unconditional love – an allusion to the New Testament (Gospel of John 13:34).

Institutional and ritual devices ensure the ritualization of the speech, demonstrating the monarch's legitimacy and the succession of tradition. King Charles III's solemn style is characterized by the use of archaism, passive constructions, and a formal register: *"I am deeply aware of this great inheritance and of the duties and heavy responsibilities of sovereignty which have now passed to me."* (Address to Members of Parliament and the House of Lords at Westminster Hall, 12 September 2022).

The state, tradition, and the crown are often personified in Charles III's speeches as living entities, which enhances their symbolic weight: *"The Crown itself has always stood for all that is good in our society..."* (Coronation Day Speech, 6 May 2023).

The openings and closings of the speeches are saturated with fixed phrases from the ritual code of the British Monarchy: *"And to carry out the heavy task that has been laid upon me, and to which I now dedicate what remains to me of my life, I pray for the guidance and help of Almighty God. God save the King."* (Address to the Accession Council – 10 September 2022). This phrase is the central traditional formula of the British Monarchy, a symbol of the continuation of legitimate succession of power.

*"That promise of lifelong service I renew to you all today."* (First Address to the Nation, 9 September 2022). This is a phrase with which Charles III reproduces and renews the promise first delivered by his mother, Elizabeth II, in 1947. It is a unique recitative formula of service that is repeated in the monarch's various speeches.

Inclusive and humanistic devices – this group of stylistic means reflects Charles III's desire to modernize monarchical rhetoric, making it closer to society. This includes the active use of inclusive pronouns 'we, our, together': *"Together with the Queen Consort, we will continue to serve you all, with loyalty, respect and love."* (First Address to the Nation, 9 September 2022).

The King often emphasizes solidarity, respect for different cultures, religions, and regions: *"In the Commonwealth, we find the unity that transcends geography, culture, and belief. It is a family of nations..."* (Speech at the Opening Ceremony of the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM), Kigali, 24 June 2022). The monarch's speech frequently takes on the character of a moral manifesto, urging action: *"Let us be guided by compassion, justice, and a sense of duty to one another."*

Narrative theatricality – rhythm, pauses, and intonational emphasis – is present in Charles's speeches. Pausing for emotional effect is notably observed in references to the memory of Elizabeth II or when mentioning wars and crises. During the delivery of the "First Address to the Nation" on September 9, 2022, distinct pauses are noticeable before the phrases *"My darling Mama"* and *"Thank you"*, which amplify the emotional impact of the address. The King is characterized by the use of short sentences and expressive syntactic constructions that facilitate perception: *"She pledged herself to serve. She kept that promise. She is mourned deeply."* (First Address to the Nation, 9 September 2022).

Tropes, as means of figurative language, play an important role in the monarch's political discourse, helping not only to enhance emotional impact but also to structure political reality through symbolism, associations, personification, and contrast. King Charles III actively uses metaphor, epithet, allegory, comparison, personification, hyperbole, and periphrasis, creating a rhetorical style that is both flexible and traditionally recognizable.

Metaphor is used to create associative thinking, transfer meanings, and symbolize concepts (crown, service, nature, memory): *"The Crown itself has always stood for all that is good in our society…"* (Coronation Day Speech – 6 May 2023). The metaphor *"The Crown stood for"* personifies the Crown as a moral and political force; *"The weight of history and the light of hope"* (First Address to the Nation, 9 September 2022) represents a contrastive metaphor that combines succession and future perspective.

A rather broad interpretation of the concept of "epithet" is proposed by H. H. Asmakovska and N. M. Sharmanova. According to the scholars, it is "a trope that

reveals a generalized evaluation of objects, phenomena, and processes, expressed by a certain set of figurative lexical meanings, which has high axiological potential and constitutes an open structural-semantic sub-paradigm, including: coloristic, gustatory (taste), tactile, odoriferous, acoustic, emotive, and others" (Asmakovska & Sharmanova, 2025, c. 85). The function of epithets in King Charles III's speeches is to provide an emotional or value-based coloring to concepts, amplifying pathos or authority: the epithets *"lifelong service," "unwavering devotion," and "deep sense of duty"* (Speech to Parliament at Westminster Hall – 12 September 2022) reinforce the moral grandeur of Queen Elizabeth II's image.

*"My beloved mother, the late Queen..."* (First Address to the Nation – 9 September 2022). Beloved is a positive-emotional epithet that emphasizes personal deep respect for Elizabeth II. *"Her unwavering devotion to duty."* (Address to Parliament at Westminster Hall – 12 September 2022). *Unwavering* is an evaluative epithet that emphasizes constancy and resilience.

Personification aims to endow abstract concepts with the features of a living being or agency: *"Grief is the price we pay for love."* (First Address to the Nation – 9 September 2022). In this famous saying (which Charles quoted in his address), grief acquires the property of acting – to "pay." *"The Crown itself has always stood for all that is good in our society."* (Coronation Speech – 6 May 2023). The Crown acts as an agent that "stands for good" – a classic example of the personification of an institution.

Comparison is used to create semantic parallels, emphasizing similarity or contrast: *"Like the countless others who make up our communities, she, too, was a servant of the people."* (First Address to the Nation – 9 September 2022). Comparing the Queen to ordinary people is a strategy for the humanization of the monarchical figure.

For the purpose of creating a holistic figurative structure in which individual elements carry symbolic meaning, allegory is used in King Charles III's speeches: *"The garden of our shared life is one that we must all tend with care."* (Christmas Broadcast – 25 December 2023). Here we see the allegorical image of the society as a garden that requires care.

The function of periphrasis in the monarch's public speaking is to replace a direct name with a descriptive phrase, emphasizing significance or status: *"My beloved mother, the late Queen…"* (Address to the Nation – 9 September 2022). This periphrasis replaces the name with a symbolic formula, underscoring the emotional context.

King Charles III applies hyperbole in his political speeches to intensify the impression and emphasize the scale or significance of a phenomenon: *"Her reign was unmatched in its length, dignity and devotion."* (Address to the Accession Council – 10 September 2022). The word *unmatched* is used to hyperbolize the scale of Elizabeth II's reign. *"Our planet has reached a tipping point – a crisis that threatens our very existence."* (COP26 World Leaders Summit Speech – 1 November 2021). The phrase 'threatens our very existence' is a typical hyperbole in ecological discourse that strengthens the call to action. *"The outpouring of love and sympathy has been overwhelming."* (First Address to the Nation – 9 September 2022). The word *overwhelming* is used as a hyperbolic characteristic of the massiveness of the emotional reaction.

It should be noted that the application of stylistic devices in Charles III's speeches performs several functions:

1. Unifying function – emphasizing national unity (use of *"we," "our," "together"*);

2. Moral-value reflection function – accentuating eternal values: duty, service, faith;

3. Memory-creation function – Charles III's rhetoric actively utilizes the language of collective memory, forming a connection between generations;

4. Adaptation function – an attempt to combine the traditional discourse of the monarchy with new societal demands for openness, diversity, and environmentalism

The analysis of stylistic devices and tropes in King Charles III's political speeches confirms the presence of a stable rhetorical structure that synthesizes the traditions of the British Monarchy with the current challenges of modernity. King Charles III's language proves to be simultaneously hereditary, symbolically balanced, and conceptually flexible. His speeches not only take the representative function of the monarch, but also serve as a means of shaping political culture, mobilizing societal values, and adapting the monarchy to the new conditions of the global world.

**Conclusions and perspectives.**

As a result of the linguo-stylistic analysis of King Charles III's political speeches, it has been proven that his rhetoric constitutes an example of a high level of political communication, in which the traditions of monarchical discourse, humanistic ethics, and contemporary stylistic practices are combined. The

monarch's speech has a clearly expressed pragmatic orientation: it has not only a symbolic function but also socio-political, moral-ethical, and identification functions.

The stylistic devices and tropes in Charles III's speeches are not accidental or secondary elements, but rather systemic rhetorical tools that serve as means for constructing the public image of the monarch, the nation's moral authority, and the guarantor of historical continuity. The typology of the identified stylistic devices includes: syntactic-structural devices – anaphora, parallelism, inversion; emotional-expressive means – rhetorical questions, appeals to emotion, quotes, and allusions; institutional-ritual means – solemn style, ceremonial formulas, personification of institutions; inclusive-humanistic means – inclusive pronouns (we, our, together), moral appeals, and the language of unity; narrative performativity – rhythm, intonational pausing, and sentence fragmentation; tropes – metaphor, epithet, personification, comparison, allegory, hyperbole, and periphrasis.

Further prospects for research include the study of King Charles III's figurative language in speeches concerning environmental issues, religion, and international relations; and a cognitive analysis of tropes as conceptual schemes (metaphor as a mental model of power, service, the state, etc.).

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